

## Questions about FluMist® vaccine for H1N1 (swine flu)

### Can I get the H1N1 vaccine as nasal-spray?

If you are a healthy person 2 to 49 years of age and **not** pregnant, you can get the FluMist® (nasal-spray) vaccine. It is safe to get FluMist® if you are breastfeeding or if you are sick with a minor illness. If you have a stuffy or runny nose, FluMist® may be less effective. Check with your healthcare provider to find out if they offer FluMist®.

### Who cannot get the H1N1 FluMist® vaccine?

- Children less than 2 years of age
- People 50 years of age and over
- Pregnant women
- People with a chronic medical condition like diabetes, asthma, heart disease, or lung disease
- People with illnesses that weaken the immune system or who take medication that weakens immunity
- Children less than 5 years old with one or more episodes of wheezing in the past year
- Children or adolescents taking aspirin
- People who have a severe allergy to eggs
- People with a history of Guillain-Barré Syndrome, a rare disorder of the nervous system

### Can I get the flu from H1N1 FluMist®?

FluMist® cannot cause the flu in healthy people. Unlike the flu shot, FluMist® does contain a weakened live virus. FluMist® works by causing a very mild infection in the nose and throat to produce immune system protection against the flu. The weakened virus does not infect the lungs or other parts of your body. Some people have mild side effects from FluMist® (see below). Side effects mean your body is responding to the vaccine.

### Can I pass the virus from the FluMist® vaccine to other people?

The risk of passing the weakened virus to another person is extremely small and the virus is so weakened that it is unlikely to make another person sick. You do not need to stay away from other people after you get the vaccine. It is safe to get FluMist® even if you have contact with pregnant women, babies, or people with moderately weakened immune systems (for example, people with asthma, diabetes, cancer or HIV).

### What are the possible side effects of H1N1 FluMist®?

Most people will not have side effects. If side effects occur, they will likely be mild and short lasting. In children, mild reactions can include runny nose, cough, headache, wheezing, vomiting, muscle aches, and mild fever. In adults, side effects can include runny nose, headache, sore throat, and cough. As with any medicine, there is a very small chance that an allergic reaction may occur. Serious problems from the flu vaccine are very rare. The risk from the vaccine is much smaller than the risk from the flu.

### Does H1N1 FluMist® vaccine contain mercury from the preservative thimerosal?

No. FluMist® does not contain mercury from the preservative thimerosal. It does not contain any preservative.

### Was the H1N1 FluMist® vaccine tested for safety?

Yes. The H1N1 flu vaccine is made the same way as the seasonal flu vaccine. The seasonal flu vaccine and all its ingredients have been shown to be very safe. The H1N1 flu vaccine has been tested for safety just like the seasonal flu vaccine.

### Can I get H1N1 FluMist® vaccine and the seasonal flu vaccine at the same time?

Yes, but you will need to get one vaccine as a flu shot and the other as FluMist® if you get them at the same time. If you want to get both vaccines as FluMist®, they will need to be spaced 4 weeks apart.

### How many doses of vaccine will I need?

People age 10 and over will only need one dose of H1N1 flu vaccine. Children 9 and younger will need 2 doses of H1N1 flu vaccine. The 2 doses of H1N1 vaccine should be spaced at least 4 weeks apart.

For ongoing updates, go to [www.kingcounty.gov/health/h1n1](http://www.kingcounty.gov/health/h1n1) or call the Flu Hotline 877-903-5464, 24 hours/day (English and Spanish)